hBUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE REPORT

City of Concord Edward Roberge Rob Mack

Fitzgerald & Halliday

Carroll

HDR Jim Murphy

Stephanie Dyer-

Consulting Party-New Castle-Rye Esther Kennedy

SUBJECT: Monthly SHPO-FHWA-ACOE-NHDOT Cultural Resources Meeting

DATE OF CONFERENCES: January 15, 2015

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE: John O. Morton Building

ATTENDED BY:

(*via teleconference)

PROJECTS/PRESENTATIONS REVIEWED THIS MONTH:

(minutes on subsequent pages)

January 15, 2015	1
Concord 28053, X-A003(689)	
New Castle-Rye 16127, X-A001(146)	
Durham-Newmarket 13080, X-5133(009)	
Concord-Manchester-Nashua-Lowell, 16317 & 63037-A	
Concord 28977, X-A003(902)	
Wentworth 26903 X-A003(407)	

January 15, 2015

Concord 28053, X-A003(689)

Participants: Ed Roberge, Rob Mack, City of Concord; Ron Crickard, Robert Hudson, NHDOT

Ed Roberge introduced the project which is essentially a conversion of the current four-lane roadway to a three-lane section: one through lane in each direction, a two-way left-turn lane and bike shoulders along Loudon Road, as part of the Corridor Safety Improvements Project. The lane conversion was originally envisioned as a result of a 2001 corridor study which included a

substantial public component. The construction of Regional Drive in 2004 was one part of the recommended course of action to provide alternative east-west access between the downtown and the Concord Heights prior to implementing a lane conversion. The city updated the corridor study in 2012 and partnered with the NHDOT in 2013 to develop the project under the Highway Safety Improvement Program. The project was presented to the public at a December 2013 public information meeting, and approved by City Council in February 2014 following a formal public hearing. The project is currently in the preliminary design and environmental documentation stage. It is anticipated that the project will be advertised for construction in late spring, with construction to occur during this summer.

Rob Mack presented the project concept plans which essentially mill and resurface about 7,900 feet of Loudon Road (NH Route 9) within existing curb lines from its intersection at Hazen Drive/Airport Road easterly to the Old Loudon Road intersection just west of D'Amante Drive. The existing four-lane segments between signalized intersections will be restriped to include: one travel lane in each direction; a center two-way left-turn lane; and bicycle shoulders on each side. Existing curb lines and lane use at the three signalized intersections will remain, with no change in signal operation. Each of the five existing mid-block pedestrian crosswalks will be reconstructed to include a median refuge island, push-button activated crosswalk beacons, and accessible ramps. Accessible bus pullouts will be constructed at eight bus stop locations. Curb and sidewalks will be extended at select locations to narrow overly-wide driveway openings to enhance walking safety. All work will be performed within the city's right-of-way except for small easement areas that may be needed for a few feet behind sidewalk at four bus stop locations to meet accessibility requirements.

Laura Black summarized NHDHR comments on the RPR. There are no archaeological issues. The only area with potential for impact seems to be Arnie's (164 Loudon Road) where a proposed bus stop appears to impact parking spots and closes off access points to Loudon Road. The project should identify the age of the building and share outcomes of public consultations at this location.

Ed Roberge recalled that the Arnie's site was originally built as a Dairy Queen, perhaps in the late 1950s or early 1960s. The franchise ended in the mid-1980s when it was sold and rebranded as Arnie's. An addition to the building was subsequently added. The site currently has an extended curb-cut opening with full access to Loudon Road as well as full side-street access to both Gates and Ellsworth Streets; many patrons use these side street entrances as they may be safer than direct access from the site to Loudon Road. A pedestrian crossing signal and bus stop is currently located on the site's Loudon Road frontage, a feature retained in the current concept design. Locations and details of bus stop pullouts are still preliminary and some flexibility is anticipated as the design progresses.

Rob Mack added that one objective of the project is to narrow overly-wide driveway openings along the corridor. A safety enhancement, such improvements consolidate driveway movements at fewer, well-controlled locations as well as allow shorter driveway crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists travelling the corridor. Much of Arnie's existing Loudon Road frontage is uncontrolled, open curb cut and the intent is to extend curb/sidewalk along this extended opening and focus site access to the two side-street intersections.

Laura Black noted that the Arnie's site was the only location in the project area where NHDHR had a potential concern; additional information was needed to fully assess project effects at this location. She recommended that the design team provide cultural resources staff with the bus stop

design features as they become further refined, including potential effects of the project regarding parking and access at this site.

New Castle-Rye 16127, X-A001(146)

Participants: Jim Murphy, HDR; Stephanie Dyer-Carroll, Fitzgerald & Halliday; Esther Kennedy, Consulting Party; Victoria Chase, Bob Landry, Robert Juliano, Marc Laurin, NHDOT

Continued consultation and update on developments for the New Castle-Rye Bridge, including the proposed fixed alternative.

The fourth coordination meeting with New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on the New Castle-Rye Bridge Project was held on January 15, 2015 at the offices of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT). Bob Landry with NHDOT opened the meeting with a brief review of the status of the project. When the NHDOT and SHPO last met on the project on February 6, 2014, the preferred alternative was Replacement with Bascule. However, NHDOT received public comments suggesting that a fixed bridge should be considered due to cost. Landry explained that a fixed bridge at the existing profile grade was not initially considered a viable option due to anticipated impacts to navigation and area marinas. NHDOT believed that the federal agencies with jurisdiction over the channel would not approve/permit a fixed bridge without elevating it. A fixed elevated bridge was investigated but rejected due to potential visual, environmental and property impacts. In subsequent conversations with the U.S. Coast Guard, however, they indicated that they would not necessarily reject a fixed bridge and that a final decision will be made once NHDOT submits a permit application.

Landry stated that NHDOT went back to the Public Advisory Committee in April 2014 to get their input before holding a public meeting in May 2014. At the public meeting, the majority of attendees supported the Replacement with Bascule Alternative. Following the meeting, the Town of Rye Board of Selectman requested that a Benefit-Cost Analysis be prepared that looked at both the bascule and a fixed bridge on the current horizontal alignment (Fixed Alternative). The analysis indicated that the Fixed Alternative would cost approximately \$10 million less, considering both capital costs and maintenance. Landry explained though that the study identified benefits of the Bascule Alternative that could not be quantified, such as maintaining unobstructed access for the fishing community, providing for safe harbor in storms, boat-related economic activity, climate change resiliency, and the maintenance of property values. Bob Landry indicated that the Army Corps of Engineers has told NHDOT in an email that dredging of the back channel could occur under either alternative, but that it would be easier and less costly with a bascule span.

NHDOT held another meeting with the Public Advisory Committee in December 2014 to brief them on the Benefit-Cost Analysis. Attendees discussed the fact that the Fixed Alternative would allow for a new water line to be run along Wentworth Road and across the bridge, addressing issues with low water pressure in the area. Members of the Public Advisory Committee expressed support for the Fixed Alternative, primarily due to the water line and cost savings. Landry indicated that, due to the cost savings, the Fixed Alternative is now NHDOT's preferred alternative. He then showed attendees renderings of both the Fixed and Bascule Alternatives.

Landry ended the presentation by outlining next steps. These include a public meeting to be held on February 5, 2015; revisions to and resubmission of the Determination of Effects Memorandum;

the preparation of a 4(f) Evaluation; the preparation and execution of a Memorandum of Agreement; and the preparation of a U.S. Coast Guard Permit.

Questions and comments followed the presentation, including the following:

- Jamie Sikora with FHWA asked when the last maintenance dredging was undertaken. Bob Landry stated that it was definitely dredged in 1971, but that it may have been dredged more recently. He indicated that he could look it up.
- Edna Feighner asked whether the team had considered climate change and if a fixed bridge will be viable for the next 20 to 30 years. Bob Landry indicated that there is a range in predicted sea level rise and that it depends on where it falls within this range.
- Laura Black said that it's good that NHDOT is holding another public meeting. She pointed
 out that the majority of attendees at the last public meeting supported a bascule span and that
 the New Castle Historical Society submitted a letter in support of a bascule. She further stated
 that a fixed bridge goes against the prior commitment to maintain the bascule type in New
 Hampshire.
- Esther Kennedy stated that there are businesses that will be impacted by the selection of a fixed bridge. She mentioned Creek Farm which is located on Sagamore Creek. It is a historic property that has recently been rented to Cornell University and the University of New Hampshire, but is currently vacant. The property is owned by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests.
- Laura Black indicated that a fixed bridge has the potential to restrict access to the Wentworth Coolidge National Historic Site. She suggested that NHDOT coordinate with Ben Wilson at the Bureau of Historic Sites.
- Bob Landry stated that at low tide the channel is only six feet wide. He has been told that it can't accommodate large boats. He stated that he would confirm this with the Port Authority.
- Laura Black said that when NHDOT discussed a fixed bridge before there were property
 impacts. Jim Murphy indicated that that was due to the fact the fixed alternative then under
 consideration raised the profile by six feet. It was dismissed due to potential environmental
 and property impacts. There would be no property impacts under the current Fixed
 Alternative.
- Esther Kennedy stated that there is a tradition of fishing in the area. It would be a loss to the area if commercial fishing died out to the restricted access. She indicated that the fishermen use the back channel as a safe harbor during storms and that they made this clear at the last public meeting. In addition, she said that she knows two sailboat owners and that it would be inconvenient for them to have to take their masts down. She stated that both the City of Portsmouth Port Committee and the Fishing Industry Committee voted and that they support a bascule.
- Edna Feigner said that NHDOT should talk to Kevin Nyhan about storms. Storms and sea level rise will be important issues over the next 20-30 years.
- Esther Kennedy said that there are ways to work around the water line. Running a new line
 across the bridge is not the only way to increase water pressure in the area. She indicated that
 the water line has not been formally considered by the Portsmouth City Council. Bob Landry
 said that NHDOT is trying to get the cost to trench the water line. He also said that Peter Rice
 with the Water Authority has been invited to the public meeting to speak to the issue of the
 water line.
- Sheila Charles stated that she would send the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers email to the consulting parties.

- Laura Black indicated that NHDOT needs to look more closely at the impacts of a fixed bridge that cannot be quantified.
- Victoria Chase requested that a representative from the SHPO's office attend the public meeting on February 5th.
- Bob Landry indicated that NHDOT is trying to get *Seacoastonline* to do an article about the fixed alternative and the upcoming public meeting.
- Jim Murphy said that NHDOT will meet with SHPO following the public meeting to discuss the schedule.

Durham-Newmarket 13080, X-5133(009) Participants: Marc Laurin, Ron Grandmaison, Wendy Johnson, Rick Faul, NHDOT

Continued consultation and discussion of relocation of a drainage outlet.

Ron Grandmaison described a proposal from an abutter to pipe drainage, which presently outlets onto his property, and redirect through the Newmarket Community Church property to a proposed drainage outlet to the Lamprey. This proposed modification to the NH Route 108 drainage would consist of excavating approximately 200 feet through the field located in the back of the church and would require placing a permanent drainage easement on the property. Jamison Sikora stated that the impacts would not be a 4(f) concern as long as there were no archeological concerns. Edna Feighner stated that testing would need to be done as this is a sensitive area for archeology. The testing would be a combined Phase IA/IB effort and should not require many test pits, maybe 5or 6. Laura Black thought that an individual inventory form may be needed if the property is to be encumbered with a permanent easement.

Concord-Manchester-Nashua-Lowell, 16317 & 63037-A Participants: Joel Dworsky, Russ Wilder, Vanessa Zeoli, AECOM/URS; Ron Crickard, Ron Grandmaison, Patrick Herlihy, Christine Perron, NHDOT;

Via Telephone Conference: Laura Shick, Trevor Gibson, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Jonathan Patton, Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), Sean Sullivan, Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

Initial consultation on the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor Rail and Transit Study (Boston-Lowell-Nashua-Manchester-Concord Rail and Transit Alternatives Analysis (Parts A & B)). The goal for the discussion is to determine what "amount" of Section 106 review is appropriate for this Tier I study and inclusion in the EA. We will also discuss what the APE for the project should be so that report recommendations, graphics and observations would sufficiently encompass the information needed to continue review.

- Ron Crickard (NHDOT BOE) introduced himself and told the group he would be
 moderating the discussion. He said that the group was meeting to review the scope
 of the project, the cultural resource work to date on the project and give a preview
 of what the AECOM/URS team has been tasked to do.
 - The goal of the meeting was to get everyone on the same page and determine what else needs to be reviewed and how we continue with the Section 106 process

- He indicated that the role of the DOT's Bureau of Environment is advisory; to guide Patrick's team and the consultant with the review process
- He recounted that the CR reports were sent to both the NH and MA SHPOs, comments were issued by both SHPO's and now we must identify next steps.
- Russ Wilder (AECOM/URS) gave a background of the project, indicating that the Alternatives Analysis consisted of two components: One for the FTA to consider transit alternatives and the other for intercity rail service for the FRA.
 - Project coordination to date was reviewed: URS met with FRA in March 2013 and the scope of the effort for environmental (and CR) was determined to include a high-level study under Tier 1, and if a project emerged, more studies would be done at the Tier 2 level
 - Russ described the CR effort to date, which fit with the agreed upon scope for the EA. The effort included background research at the NH and MA Historic Preservation Offices, a field view, and report preparation.
 - The big question to discuss, is whether URS has completed enough CR work for a planning study and does it meet the requirements of the agreed upon scope in the Project Work Plan
- Ron asked Laura Shick of FRA if she had anything to add to URS' description. Laura said she did not, but wanted to clarify that this is a planning study.
- Edna Feighner wanted clarification on the width of the right-of-way and said she was mostly concerned about archaeology
 - Russ explained that the work envisioned for the project would be limited to the ROW, except at station and layover locations. He said the ROW varies in size depending on the area, but doesn't extend in most cases more than 100-feet (50 feet on either side of the centerline of the railbed). At present, the proposed work is confined to the current railbed apart from station location and layovers. He also said that there may be drainage work needed for the project, but the extent of it would not be determined until the next stage of the project. The APE will have to be adjusted to include the drainage areas when they are identified.
 - o Patrick said more work would be done at the Tier 2 level, as well as more coordination with the agencies
- Christine asked what the timeline was for the next phase of the study
 - o Ron Grandmaison indicated that, at this time, there was no timeline
- Edna asked when the APE would be revisited.
 - o Russ responded that it would not be redefined until the project is determined and the lead agency is identified
- Sheila indicated that DOTs concern was that the APE and the language in the report not be too confining or exclusive of areas that might have to be considered in the future
 - o NHSHPO and FRA agreed with this and it was decided that it was premature to say there were no impacts in some of the project areas in the report
- Laura Black said that the NHSHPO thought that this level of study should be a broad brush look at the project area and consist of a wider APE that wouldn't exclude any resources in the immediate vicinity. From this broad brush study, the APE could be further refined to exclude resources as the project plans develop.
 - o Vanessa Zeoli said that the CR team reviewed the SHPO's website and in response, submitted the RPR, but with a much more robust report. The APE

was confined to the ROW because the work associated with the tracks was limited.

- Ron asked Jonathon Patton, MHC if he wanted to add anything about the comment letter from MA SHPO. Jonathon stated the comments in the letter were self explanatory and he did not have any additional comments at this time.
- Trevor from FRA said that the FRA will have comments for DOT on the EA shortly
 - o Patrick asked if the revised NEPA document should be sent to the SHPOs
 - o Laura from FRA said that once edits are made, they will send it
- Christine brought up other DOT projects that are in the project area for the Capitol Corridor and asked if URS had taken those projects into consideration. She specifically referenced the Stickney Avenue Park-N-Ride project.
 - Russ indicated that they had taken the I-93 Bow-Concord project into consideration
- Laura Black asked Laura Shick how public involvement is usually handled at this level of study.
 - Laura Shick said that it varies and the team can continue to identify
 consulting parties as the project progresses. She also wanted to clarify that
 this is a planning study, and not yet an undertaking. She acknowledged that
 additional consultation may be required as the project progresses
 - o Trevor from FRA said that DOT provided them with public involvement info
 - Edna asked FRA and DOT if they could provide the public involvement info that they already developed. NHDOT noted that public involvement information is included in the EA
- Laura Shick recommends no further work at this time but consultation should continue.
- Russ wrapped up by saying URS/AECOM would wait for comments on the EA from FRA

Concord 28977, X-A003(902)

Participants: Christine Perron, Don Lyford, Mike Pouliot, Mike Dugas, Kathy Corliss, NHDOT

Continued consultation on the proposal to increase overflow parking on Stickney Avenue. This project involves expansion of overflow parking at the Concord Transportation Center on Stickney Avenue. Christine Perron began the meeting by explaining that its purpose was to provide updates on questions that came up at the last meeting, to review the design alternatives that have been refined as a result of these questions, and to identify a preferred alternative. Jamie Sikora had asked at the last meeting that the Department look more closely at projected parking demands to determine how many spaces would likely be needed in 5 years (146 spaces) and 10 years (248 spaces) based on the average annual growth in demand that has been measured to date. Based on this information, the purpose of the project has been clarified to specify that, in order to provide the most benefit, the 10 year parking demand would be accommodated. Therefore, the purpose statement of the project is now "to accommodate projected and unprojected demand for parking at the Concord Transportation Center over the next ten years."

Kathy Corliss provided an overview of the refined design alternatives. Since the last meeting, the CNG fueling site has been removed, which means that this space can now be used for parking.

Each of the three design alternatives utilizes this space, which provides approximately 56 spaces. Option W would provide 145 spaces without removing any buildings, meeting the projected 5-year parking need. Option X would provide 236 spaces with 2 buildings removed (K and L), meeting the 9-year projected parking need. Option Z would provide 266 spaces with 3 buildings removed (J, K, and L), meeting the 10-year projected parking need of 248 with 18 additional spaces to accommodate reduced parking resulting from snow storage. Some of the periods of peak demand occur during the winter season, especially February school vacation week.

K. Corliss summarized questions that were raised at the last meeting:

- 1) Can the existing lot at the main terminal be restriped to gain additional spaces beyond the existing 340 currently provided. Existing aisle and parking space configurations appear to reasonably conform to geometry recommended in the 1992 AASHTO Guide for the Design of Park and Ride Facilities (26' aisle, 18.5' x 9' spaces). A limited number of spaces could be attained but nowhere near the 248 additional spaces needed to meet the 10 year projected increase in demand.
- 2) Can the former fuel facility area be utilized to offset the loss of spaces if Building I is retained? As previously discussed, it has been determined that this area can be utilized, and the area has been incorporated into the refined design alternatives. The additional 56 spaces that can be provided in this area will offset the number of spaces that are lost by retaining Building I. Each of the three refined design alternatives retain Building I.
- 3) Can parking be accommodated in front of the Main Stickney Avenue Building?
- The approximately 85 parking spaces in front of the main office building on Stickney Avenue are currently utilized by State employees that work in downtown Concord; this parking arrangement has been in place for the last 5 or 6 years.
- Between January 1 and June 30, when the Legislature is in session, the parking garage near the Capitol is closed to State employees. Administrative Services arranges for a shuttle to operate during this time to transport employees from Stickney Ave to Capitol Street. Stickney Avenue is also within walking distance to downtown Concord (approximately a 10 minute walk to Capitol Street).
- 70 to 100 State employees park on Stickney Avenue (the highest being 110), especially when the legislature is in session. Elected Representatives may park there also.
- Employees are not charged for the shuttle as it is a State-provided service. If employees utilized alternative City metered parking, such as parking along Storrs Street, they would need to pay for the daily cost of parking for 6 months every year (approximately \$20/month).
- Administrative Services looked at other sites for parking, including the Everett Arena lot, but the Stickney Ave site was selected since it is state-owned (free) and is within closer walking distance to downtown.
- Utilizing this space for the park and ride overflow parking is not considered a viable option given that the space is already committed to another use that cannot be replicated at a different location.

K. Corliss indicated that the Department's preferred alternative is Option Z. Laura Black commented that, before a preferred alternative is selected, she would like to see the Department coordinate with the City regarding the use of an alternative parking area for the State employees that currently park in front of the main office building on Stickney Avenue. C. Perron noted that utilizing the spaces in front of the office building, when combined with Option W, which retains

all buildings at the site, would provide only 230 spaces for overflow parking. This falls short of the projected 10-year parking demand of 248 spaces; therefore buildings would still need to be removed to meet the purpose of the project. L. Black noted that this option may allow fewer buildings to be removed; therefore it should be investigated. It was agreed that this option would be further investigated and C. Perron would follow up with L. Black via email once more information was known.

Wentworth 26903, X-A003(407)

Participants: Kevin Nyhan, Christine Perron, Mark Richardson, Jason Tremblay, NHDOT

Continued consultation to discuss appropriate mitigation for adverse effect. This project will replace the bypassed bridge that carries Wentworth Village Road over the Baker River. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss appropriate mitigation for the adverse effect to the bridge and historic district. Christine Perron noted that the tentative advertising date has been scheduled for May, which means that all environmental coordination and documentation needs to be wrapped up well before then.

At the Public Informational Meeting in December, the Town was asked to provide input on potential mitigation options, but no feedback was received at that time. The Historical Society did ask if they could be given a plaque from the bridge. There is a plaque on each end of the bridge, but one is cracked.

Proposed elements of a mitigation package were presented as follows:

- 1) The Department will determine if the cracked bridge plaque is repairable and will also remove the lead paint before giving the Historical Society one or both plaques.
- 2) Other components of the bridge will be offered to the Town; for example, the Bridge Steering Committee has expressed interest in retaining the bridge rail. It will be determined if removal of lead paint is necessary.
- 3) It was noted that the Storrs Monograph is already in progress as part of the Sewalls Falls bridge project and would therefore not be undertaken by the subject project. Instead, NH Historic Properties Documentation is proposed.
- 4) One of the following interpretive elements is proposed. A choice would not be made until further discussion with Town officials, the Historical Society, and the Bridge Steering Committee.
 - a. Two outdoor interpretive panels that discuss some combination of the history of crossings at the site; mill and railroad activities in the area; and the Wentworth Village historic district. A panel could be placed at either end of the bridge, or both panels could be placed at the south end of the bridge, perhaps with a bench to create a pocket park type setting.
 - b. Informational brochure for the Town library, museum/Historical Society, and websites, covering similar topics as presented in the panels.
 - c. Indoor interpretive display that could include the bridge plaque, other small components of the bridge, and an interpretive panel.

Laura Black commented that a brochure recently completed for a Weare project was not ideal and a brochure would not be her first choice. She noted that she liked the idea of a pocket park that incorporates two panels, especially because there are other Town parks in the area and because the Town clearly uses its outdoor spaces. She added that an indoor exhibit could work if done well, and perhaps some combination of an indoor and outdoor display could be developed. She suggested that one of the bridge plaques could be part of the outdoor display.

C. Perron said that an effort would now be made to reach out to the Town for input, with the preferred option being the panels within a pocket park or the indoor display. Once input from the Town is received, an MOA will be drafted for review. L. Black suggested that the MOA should be as detailed as possible, especially regarding the long-term care of the plaques and the commitment to keep them in a public space. Kevin Nyhan suggested that the Town should perhaps be a signatory to the MOA.

L. Black asked if the type of bridge to be put into place, and the visual impacts it would have, was still being determined. Mark Richardson replied that the Department is still proposing the 5' wide steel I-beam/timber deck pedestrian bridge. Any other bridge type would be up to the Town to pursue.

L. Black also asked for an update on the adaptive re-use of a covered bridge at this location. C. Perron noted that the Department has not pursued that due to the associated costs but the Town is considering the use of a covered bridge from Bedford. M. Richardson added that the Bridge Steering Committee has expressed some interest in the covered bridge at the former Wayfarer Inn property in Bedford. However, there are a lot of unknowns at this point, including how/if the bridge could be made to fit at this location. The Bridge Steering Committee and/or the Town have obtained the services of Dubois & King, an engineering consultant, to view and measure the Wayfarer Inn covered bridge to determine whether that bridge can fit in the Wentworth bridge location (perhaps on modified abutments) and whether it is in good enough condition to be separated into its prefabricated sections and transported to Wentworth for rehabilitation and placement on the abutments. More information on this issue will likely be available in the next few weeks.

(When viewing these minutes online, click on a project to zoom to the minutes for that project)

Submitted by: Sheila Charles and Jill Edelmann, Cultural Resources